

RE-INSPECTION OF NATIONAL STAR COLLEGE

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Outcome of Re-Inspection

The overall provision in the foundation curriculum area (the college's Skills for Life programme) is now **good**.

Background

National Star College was inspected in February 2002. Inspectors from the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted) and the Adult Learning Inspectorate (ALI) carried out the inspection under Section 62 of the Learning and Skills Act. The quality of provision was found to be satisfactory or better in all areas inspected, except in the foundation curriculum area (Skills for Life programme) which was found to be unsatisfactory.

Ofsted and the ALI have particular duties in relation to colleges where their inspection report indicates that individual curriculum and/or work-based learning (WBL) areas are unsatisfactory or very weak or that leadership and management are unsatisfactory or very weak. Where a college has been judged to have less than satisfactory provision in any curriculum or WBL area, or less than satisfactory leadership and management, Ofsted or the ALI will visit the college to carry out monitoring inspections of the unsatisfactory areas. As a result of the re-inspection monitoring visits, inspectors may judge that the curriculum or WBL areas, or leadership and management are satisfactory and that no further visits are required. Where leadership and management are satisfactory, all unsatisfactory provision will be re-inspected normally during one week.

If, after approximately 24 months, the college has not made sufficient progress to justify a judgement that the curriculum or WBL area or leadership and management are satisfactory, the original grade for the area that continues to be unsatisfactory will remain on the college's record until the next full inspection within the cycle. Ofsted will inform the local LSC that provision remains unsatisfactory and the reasons why.

Date of the Re-Inspection Visit

In accordance with the above procedures, re-inspection of the foundation curriculum area took place on 17 September 2002, 19-20 February 2003 and 2-5 March 2004.

Foundation Curriculum Area (Skills for Life)

In the February 2002 inspection, the quality of overall provision in this area was judged to be unsatisfactory. The following strengths and weaknesses were identified in the inspection report::

Strengths

- effective development of student independence
- recent improvements in course leadership

Weaknesses

- unsatisfactory teaching
- duplication of course content
- poor assessment and recording of progress
- some unsatisfactory resources

Following the re-inspection, inspectors judged that progress has been made in addressing the above weaknesses and that overall provision in this area is now **good**.

Staff are highly committed and have approached the development of this curriculum area with enthusiasm. There has been a significant improvement in the quality of teaching. The majority of lessons observed were judged to be good or better. There is a clear understanding of the diverse needs of the students following the foundation programme area and how these needs can be met to promote learning. In all the lessons observed, the individual needs of the students are identified on session plans and objectives link to the individual learning programmes. Targets are challenging and recording of outcomes is detailed and informs future lesson planning. In a limited number of lessons, there is inadequate management of learning. Restructuring of the programme has ensured that there is no duplication of course content. However, there are opportunities to reinforce classroom learning within the residential setting, for example, kitchen skills acquired in the formal classroom are then practised in a domestic kitchen. Multi-disciplinary teams share professional expertise to enhance the acquisition of skills that students will need in their future lives as adults. There is an effective multidisciplinary assessment process that continuously collates accurate data on each student's needs. These data inform the development of the individual learning programme and the setting of objectives and targets and help in the planning of lessons, including activities in the extended curriculum.

There has been good progress in developing resources for teaching and learning to meet student requirements, including specialist equipment and software. A Skills for Life technician has been appointed and provides additional support to students and staff. There is effective support and expertise for augmentative and alternative communication. There is good signage around the campus to promote independent orientation. Foundation programme students now have dedicated base rooms.

There will be no further re-inspection of the college because there are no remaining unsatisfactory areas.

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